

There were few surprises in Mr Carlisle's statement in the House of Commons on Tuesday. This does little to mitigate the severity of the cuts which are to be made in 1981-82. There is the promised £52m off the department's own budget. In addition there is another £124m to be found by the local education authorities—of which £87 million is to take account of the extra 1 per cent cut announced by Sir Geoffrey Howe four weeks ago, and £37m in lieu of savings never made on school transport. The cuts of £176m have to be set against a final budget of £8.2 billion.

The universities appear to have been hit the hardest with £30m (4.1 per cent) sliced off their current expenditure. Advanced further education fees only slightly less badly with a cut of £12m (some £3m less than expected) or 3.7 per cent. Both universities and the advanced further education colleges are already in the process of measuring the cost to themselves of the big overseas student fee increases forced on them by the Government during the past year. There can be little doubt there will be another even sharper reduction of overseas fee-payers in 1981-82. The colleges have also had to live with last year's capping of the pool.

It looks as if Mr Carlisle has listened to the strong pleas from the local authority associations to spare the polytechnic and colleges of higher education the worst of this scourge. Behind the £20m off non-advanced further education is the melancholy decline in the number of apprentices recruited by industry and the number of discretionary grants awarded by I.E.S.

"The remaining £65 to 70 million to come from the broad area of current expenditure in schools"—with this catch-all phrase Mr Carlisle dodges questions



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Mr Carlisle bows to the inevitable and fails to count the cost

about where the full impact of the cuts will fall. A carefully worded paragraph which acknowledges that "such a reduction in school current expenditure and in post-school education will have some impact on educational provision and on the numbers employed in the service", while insisting on the Government's belief that "the total figure for planned expenditure on education and science for 1981-82 of the £8,185 million accords with what the nation can afford at this time."

Clearly, Mr Carlisle should be pressed very hard to tell the world, and especially the teachers, what he thinks I.E.S. should do about staffing. Hitherto, governments have indicated the (relatively well-protected) staffing levels for which their budgetary plans provide. If this has been possible in the past, it must be possible now. The message which comes from every I.E.S. is that this time there is no way in which more cuts can be made without making some teachers compulsorily redundant.

This is also what many said last year

but, mercifully, it is still very hard (paga one to find a genuine compulsory redundancy among full-time primary and secondary school teachers (though the same cannot be said of non-teaching staff or part-timers). What Mr Carlisle's skilfully chosen words mean is that this time round the DES really does expect the axe to fall. Up to 3,000 or 4,000 teachers could be affected. The unions face their biggest challenge and it will not be easy, once the blood begins to flow, to maintain the special degree of protection which the teachers have so far enjoyed.

Mr Carlisle's statement only serves to heighten the interest which attaches to the forthcoming report by the Inspectorate on the effect of cuts so far on the quality of education.

So far, the cuts have fallen very unevenly, and the unevenness has been compounded by the unequal pace at which pupil rolls are falling in different places. It seems highly unlikely that the evidence of the Inspectorate will make the bitter pill of the latest round of cuts less bitter.

any more polemic. More cuts can only intensify the concentration on a narrow range of examinable aspects of the curriculum at the expense of no less important but more vulnerable forms of teaching and learning.

Add to all this the general upheaval which will follow the introduction of the block grant, and the picture becomes still more murky. It is up to Mr Carlisle to watch the situation very closely—and to support the Inspectorate in maintaining their watching brief. If, as he says, £8 billion is all the country can afford, the country certainly cannot afford to see vagaries in the methods of financing local government adding gratuitously to the impacts of the latest round of cuts.

The formula chosen for Mr Heseltine's block grant is not the one favoured by the DES even though education is by far the biggest service, accounting for well over half of the spending of authorities with responsibility for education. At Philip Vennig showed in a recent background article in *The TES* (November 21) the DES had wanted a tariff which was weighted more heavily in favour of the handicapped, the socially disadvantaged and the blacks—one, in fact, which took less away from the cities. But Mr Heseltine is to be believed, it is the shire counties which have got their way and the Association of County Councils have had an even larger political payoff at the expense of London and most of the cities. Mr Carlisle, in spite of his odd letter to Mr Ian Coutts, has lost this battle.

But even here, cynicism should be held in check, or rather modified by the suspicion that not even Mr Heseltine knows with any certainty exactly how the formula will operate and there are going to be some surprises among winners and losers alike.

Comment

The limits of competence

It was back in the more ebullient days of the last Labour Government that Shirley Williams' education Green Paper made a cautiously worded attempt to get the subject of teachers' competence on to the agenda for debate. The local education authorities proved even more guarded about following this lead.

Since then the subject has been kicked around provocatively at DES conferences—sometimes even by outspoken DES officials—but few constructive proposals have been put forward. Quite often the dusty idea of a Teachers' General Council is taken off the shelf, as if some comparison with the professional watchdogs of doctors and lawyers would be helpful. But how many doctors have ever been struck off for incompetence? As with the teachers, a few are sacked for moral turpitude (after an appropriate legal hearing); very few indeed for lack of professional skills, general council or no.

As time goes by, of course, the climate becomes less and less propitious for any sort of reasoned discussion about the best methods of weeding out the weakest teachers. Whatever harm the most incompetent teachers do to the school might do to children and colleagues, it ought to be thought how that which does so, hard, no action should be taken to reduce teacher morale any further.

And yet, with redoubled vigour, and redundancy around the neck, the best teachers who have got, while discouraging those who can be shown, on the most charitable view, to be in the wrong job.

The great virtue of Sir Hargrave's proposals on "The Problem of the Incompetent Teacher" in *AMMA's* journal *Report* (page 5) is that they offer a constructive way forward—and from within the profession, rather than from external critics.

Mr Hargrave, who chairs *AMMA's* legislation and regulations committee but is expressing his own ideas on this issue, suggests a system of annual assessment that would be an important instrument in securing fair rewards for success—in the form of money or promotion—as well as picking out those who need help. It would only be when all help, diagnosis and advice failed that the question: "Is his inadequate best just not good enough?" would be faced.

"Are there grounds," he asks, "for thinking that coping with incompetence and selection for promotion are, in reality, different sides of the same coin?" This is a case for a case for a case before and has also been commended by the more serious thinkers in the NAS/UTW. It has the great advantage that it would not be merely a punitive measure, but a positive way of making promotion depend on assessed merit rather than on more "covert and secretive" methods, which should be welcome to the profession.

For those found to need help, it could provide a framework in which real support and job constructive action could be taken, with less of the inevitable threat that exists when the only way to deal with inadequacy is through employment legislation and formal warnings. As Mr Hargrave points out, the action of the Burnham Report which says that no increment shall be withheld unless service has "been declared unsatisfactory" has never been invoked.

Annual assessment is used with fair success in other professions and in the Civil Service. If it were to be tried in the teaching profession it would place a heavy load on the advisory service and on head teachers. The manpower watch figures suggest that advisers' jobs may be disappearing all over the country along with those of other non-teaching staff. Mr Hargrave's ideas may have to be only markers for the future, but they provide one more reason to remember that we need an effective advisory service to help maintain educational standards and their jobs ought to be extended rather than cut down.

Incentive to early leaving

One of the changes in social benefits introduced by the Government following a recommendation in the Supplementary Specific Commission report, concerned the eligibility of young school-leavers for supplementary benefit. Whereas any school-leaver aged 16 or over used to be able to claim on and claim benefits immediately on leaving school, under the Social Security Act of 1980, benefit can now only be claimed from three specific dates—the first Monday in January, the Monday after Easter and the first Monday in September.

This means that someone leaving school in the summer, possibly around the end of May who fails to find a job, is not now entitled to benefit for three months, during which time he or she remains dependent on parental support. This is likely to cause hardship in many families where other members of the household are out of work. What has sparked off anxiety in bodies as disparate

as the National Association of Head Teachers, the Institute of Careers Officers, the Assistant Masters and Mistresses, and the Society of Education Officers is the belief that it will step up the incentive for Easter leaving and discourage boys and girls from returning to school to the summer term to take exams.

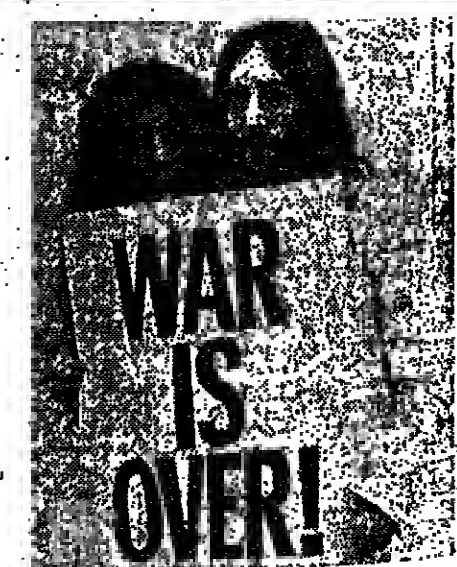
When Mr Richard Wainwright raised these matters in an adjournment debate last week, Mrs Lynde Chalkier, a junior minister at the DES, justified the change as a means of relieving administrative work. The possible disincentive effect had been considered during the Committee stage of the Social Security Bill (No 5), as it happens, and dismissed by the Government as unimportant. Now, says Mrs Chalkier, the DES and the DES will watch the situation closely and see whether the fears prove to be justified.

The risk is obvious. The Government say they "are not convinced that pupils will choose to sacrifice their longer-term career interests for the sake of short-term financial gain" but such a statement in itself has a cruel irony in relation to those school-leavers who are marginally fit to drop out. It was a mistake to change the date. It ought to be rescinded by regulation as soon as possible. The logical alternative would be to do away with Easter leaving, but this would cause still greater buncing in the job market between June and September.

Standing PAT in Burnham

The modest change in the composition of the Burnham Committee follows the proposal adopted earlier this year—a place for the Professional Association of Teachers, an extra place for the National Association of Schoolmasters. The National Union of Teachers loses its absolute majority, but with 16 of the 32 seats and a working alliance with the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education the NUT grip on the teachers' panel is still secure.

From PAT's point of view, getting on the list of Great Britain's representative bodies, and the National Association of Schoolmasters, PAT has collected a membership of 20,000, presumably at the expense of the other major unions. PAT's progress shows the road to Burnham membership has become less thorny with the years. It took the NAS all of 42 years to shoulder its way to Burnham.



The real sixties

The shooting of John Lennon was a dreadful murder, a meaningless Manhattan crime, an unexplained event which nevertheless left a pattern of unreason in the mind of a modernist masterpiece. At one level, perhaps, the only important level, it was the occasion of intimate, personal and lasting sadness to a few individuals—those close to Lennon and to his attacker. In another, altogether more trivial, sense, it was a media event which flashed across the world's television screens with a brief and superficial pang for the passing symbol of lost youth.

The Sunday newspapers responded with long articles recounting the familiar story of the Beatles, their headlong rush to fame and fortune, and Lennon's own response to the pressures which went with the drugs and the music, the hysteria, the hitler, the violence which he took refuge from wealth and celebrity.

What is deeply depressing is the all too obvious assumption that this commercial phenomenon was an amalgam of undemanding, but deafening, music, juvenile social protest, drug abuse, and a generation of young people. Here it is, a generation of pop sociology with a vengeance.

No comment

"Mr... is an ex-schoolmaster and was not Special Air Services officer, but has not taken part in or organized violent activities." From a report on extreme right-wing pressure groups in *The Observer* (November 15, 1980).

NEWS

NUT keeps control of pay panel despite loss of overall majority

PAT wins Burnham seat

Richard Garner

The National Union of Teachers is to lose its overall majority on the teachers' panel of the Burnham Committee which negotiates pay, as a result of the long-awaited review of membership carried out by Mr Mark Carlisle, the Education Secretary.

The suggested new line-up, which has been circulated to teachers' organizations for their comment, the NUT would retain its 16 seats but the overall size of the panel would be increased from 30 to 32.

The NUT is still almost certain to retain control of it, however, as the delegates from the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education has always held with it in the past.

The two changes recommended by Mr Carlisle would bring the Professional Association of Teachers, a union whose members pledge not to strike, on to the committee for the first time and increase the representation of the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers from six to 10.

Mr Fred Jarvis, general secretary of the NUT, said: "At first glance it is as bad as it could have been but we have maintained the balance over all the other

teachers' associations that our membership warrants. We will be considering it at our next executive meeting."

Mr David Hart, general secretary of the NAHT, said: "Our preliminary reaction is that we see no reason why NATFHE should not have a seat on the Burnham committee since they have no members in primary or secondary schools."

"We would also question whether there was satisfactory representation for head teachers. Considering we represent the heads of two-thirds of the schools, we would question whether two seats was adequate to serve heads' interests."

The NAS/UTW said that the review proposed "less rough justice" than at present. Teachers' organizations have been asked to comment on the proposals by mid-January so the changes can be effectively before next year's pay negotiations begin.

Mr Peter Dawson, general secretary of PAT, said that the voice of moderation would be heard more strongly, with PAT being given a place on Burnham. The Secondary Schools' Association and the Assistant Masters and Mistresses' Association keep their one and four seats respectively.

Local authority leaders met Mr Mark Carlisle, the education secretary, yesterday to press him to change the Remuneration of Teachers Act so that pay and conditions of service can be negotiated together.

However, the two local authority associations, the Association of Metropolitan Authorities and the Association of County Councils, were not odds over the sort of changes they want made to the Act next year.

The Shire counties want to alter the present system of arbitration if negotiations on pay reach stalemate. The ACC want arbitration to take place only if both sides agree, while the AMA, representing the big cities, want to retain the present system whereby either the teachers or the management can elect to go to arbitration.

The cities, many of which are Labour controlled, fear that the 6 per cent pay limit will cause major and possible industrial action among their teaching forces, and want the option for teachers to choose arbitration unilaterally left open.

The results of arbitration are binding on both sides, the government gets its way, and the government gets its way, which will involve legislation in both houses of Parliament.

Cuts sweep 14,000 teachers off payroll

Philip Yennig

Only 9,000 full time teaching jobs were saved in the last year—once again the biggest drop since records began.

But the brunt of the Government's attack on local government education has been borne by school cooks, secretaries, and other non-teaching staff. Their numbers have fallen by nearly six per cent, a most drastic cut of all local authority employees.

The new figures, from the official Local Authority Manpower Survey, show that for the first time since the cuts began, the number of education jobs has fallen.

During the year, the September figures reveal a genuine reduction in the number of teachers and college lecturers in England and Wales was 555,632 (including the full time equivalent of part time). This was 1.7 per cent less than in 1979 and corresponds exactly to the average cut for all local authority services. By far the largest part of the fall has been in non-teaching staff.

The most dramatic effect has been the contraction of the school teaching force. The loss of 15,730 full time snailly jobs and 19,589 part time ones. This has cut the non-teaching force from over 423,000 last year to 399,000 this September.

Though the figures do not give a detailed breakdown for the loss of education jobs in each area, they do show that the Inner London Education Authority cut its full time education staff (teachers and others) from 41,039 to 40,148, and its part time staff from 42,748 to 41,753.

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Macfarlane wins day on report

Mark Jackson

The attempt by junior ministers to "gobble" the Macfarlane report on 15 to 19 education has failed. The report, which will be published next month, will now give a guarded approval to the principle of separate tertiary education.

On Tuesday the local authority representatives who make up the committee under Mr Neil Macfarlane, the education under secretary, were presented with the final and final draft of the report. It says that sixth forms will continue to some areas, which can be taken to imply that they are likely to be replaced by sixth form or tertiary colleges everywhere else.

It took the committee less than an hour to agree, without dissent, to the draft, which they accepted was largely the same as the version originally prepared for them by a panel of DES officials and local authority officers. Some members felt that it stated the case for a break at 16, if anything more strongly.

Last week the committee rejected a draft which said that it took no position on the issue. The draft had been urged on Mr Macfarlane and on Mr Mark Carlisle, the Education Secretary, by two other DES ministers who are staunch supporters of school sixth forms, Lord Young and Mr Rhodes Boyson. They are thought to have secured the backing of the Prime Minister.

Back in Sheffield this week, one of the committee members who led the opposition to the changes, Mr Peter Horton, set in train moves to introduce a tertiary college system in his own city.

The education committee, of which he is chairman, is pursuing gradually to turn its existing 12 consortia of secondary schools, which already coordinate the sixth form provision, into tertiary groups. The plan is that each group should have a sixth form centre, staffed part time by teachers from the schools, which will eventually bring in FE colleges.

New round of cuts

continued from page one

Mr Fred Jarvis, NUT general secretary, added that he feared the latest cuts could mean compulsory redundancies. "The scale on which that happens," he said, "will depend on how individual I.E.S. react to the pressure we shall exert on them to raise rates rather than cut standards."

The National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers, said the latest cuts represented "the completion of the U-turn on the Government's previous pledge to maintain and improve standards in the education service."

"As soon as they get into the field of compulsory redundancies or worsening of standards through the pupil-teacher ratio, that's when we shall start militant action or we've already done in some authorities like Trafford," he said.

The cuts were "disastrous and appalling", Mrs Nikki Harrison, chairman of the education committee of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, said. "The £12 million an advanced further education is so distressing because it's going to hit just a few authorities. And the £65 million on schools is going to hit all of them. It's going to mean compulsory redundancies—there's no way we can get round that," she said.

Mr Alister Lawton, chairman of CLEA, said the announcement contained few surprises but was based on assumptions which might well prove wrong. He feared that the Government had underestimated the number of students who would be entering advanced further education next year and over-estimated the number of teachers who could be lost through natural wastage. The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals said the Government had inflicted "a further severe blow on the universities. The combined effect of these cuts and the overseas students policy seems likely to be an unprecedented loss of income in one year of at least 7 per cent."

Rate support grant.

A shift of resources in favour of the county councils at the expense of the inner London boroughs will be achieved in the distribution of next year's £10,955m rate support grant, according to Mr Michael Heseltine, the Environment Secretary.

The Inner London Education Authority—which is receiving a direct grant for the first time—will be £55m less in its budget, according to the Department of Environment's own figures. Mr Heseltine announced that the county council's share of the rate support grant "cake" would go up from 5.6 per cent to 5.4 per cent in the financial year 1981 to 1982. London's share would drop from 16.7 per cent to 15.8 per cent, and the metropolitan areas would get 29.8 per cent rather than 29.7 per cent.

A device known as the "threshold" has been set at 10 per cent; if a council spends more than 10 per cent over what the Government estimates it should spend, then it will be penalised progressively.

Chief Inspector Miss Sheila Browne told MPs on Wednesday that it would be "a miracle" if the curriculum in some schools were not affected by spending cuts. Speaking to the Commons select committee on education she said: "It will need all the ingenuity of institutions to ensure that across the ability range standards remain as good as they might be for all pupils."

Miss Browne was effectively disagreeing with Mr Mark Carlisle the Education Secretary who had said he accepted there would be "some effect" on the standard of provision but that "it did not necessarily mean the same thing as the quality of education."

Mr Carlisle said he could not give a breakdown of the projected £557m cut on school spending until he had further discussions with the local authority associations. There would be 97 different ways in which the cuts would be put into practice on the ground, he pointed out.

Mr Carlisle and his officials did not dispute an estimate made by the committee's chairman—Mr Christopher Price—that the Government's target for spending in the ILEA would mean a 14 per cent cut in its budget. The amount the government considered ILEA should spend should be regarded as "a benchmark" he said.

But Mr Price added, "We are delighted that the Government has now reversed the trend and put a stop to the drift of money away from the shires."

However, the redistribution could be overshadowed by the overall reduction in the volume of expenditure—3 per cent in line with Government targets plus a drop from 60 per cent to 59 per cent in the share that Government will meet. On top of that there are cash limits of 6 per cent for wages and 11 per cent for prices. At estimated 1981-82 prices the total relevant expenditure for local government in England will be £18,423m; education's share is estimated at £9,080m. The grant will provide £10,955m of the total.

"This will place severe demands on local government... Nevertheless there is no alternative but to ensure that local government plays its part in the reduction of public expenditure," said Mr Heseltine.

Rates could rise in England by an average of at least 20 per cent according to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy. But in inner London some councils expect rises of between 30 and 40 per cent. If the Inner London Education Authority continues to spend at the rate of about £250 per head rather than at the DOE's assessed need of £193, the boroughs which are still accepted by ILEA will have to raise rates even higher.

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MEMO

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75p

NEWS

Too much Xeroxing, too little contact with students criticized

Teaching must change, says poly chief

by David Lister

Radical changes in polytechnic teaching methods were called for this week by Dr George Talley, the director of Sheffield City Polytechnic.

He is critical of the excessive amount of handouts and duplicated material given to students by lecturers and the lack of personal attention. He also foresees the eventual transformation of the polytechnic library.

Sheffield Polytechnic has been facing a cash crisis and was recently hit by the local council with a 10 per cent cut in its budget. The staff student ratio is the worst from its parent 9.5 to 14 in one, nearly double the ratio of the early seventies. This means that by 1982 the number of teaching staff will have to be cut by 70 while the number of students will increase by 700.

Dr Talley says in an internal polytechnic publication that recent pay awards have increased the teaching staff salary bill by 13m or 30 per cent in one year, and he adds that the pressures for radical changes in teaching methods are new.

Dr Talley said this week he was recommending more dependence on learning packages instead of teaching staff. Constructing lectures, then thinking about handouts and then thinking about the reading list. He added that often 80 per cent of the recommended reading lists were redundant. And this led to over-dependence on books and book learning and we are not getting adequate liaison between the teaching staff and the library staff to get a new development in teaching methods.

Dr Talley said he was also con-



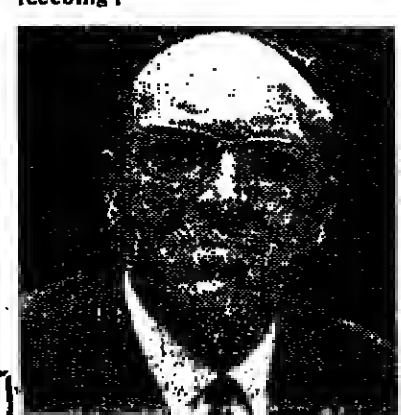
The Sheffield City Polytechnic.

cerned about the amount of photocopying indulged in by lecturers and handouts given to students. "The names of the inventors of Xeroxing should be inscribed prominently in the foyer of every institution of higher education", he joked.

He added: "Photocopying has become virtually impossible to control. Students are getting the equivalent of whole textbooks. It is very expensive, much more expensive than referring students to the library. "Essentially I am calling for more effective teaching. We have a lot of students here that need a lot more help from teaching staff than they are given. There is too much class contact but too little person to person contact." He said there was need for an arrangement whereby staff could pick up those students who need more tutorial work.

On the question of the role of the

polytechnic library, Dr Talley has told his staff in an internal publication: "We must seriously envisage within a decade or so the transformation of the library as we now know it. Suppose learning becomes, not book based, as so much of it now is, but VDU based. What difference would that make to our teaching?"



Dr Talley: "I am calling for more effective teaching."

Ministers' right to silence hinders select committees

by Sarah Bayliss

The right of Government ministers to refuse to give evidence to select committees is an "unfortunate precedent" which will be difficult to break, says a report by the Outer Circle Policy Unit published last week.

The fact that civil servants are advised not to reveal the advice they have given to ministers, is another major stumbling block for the select committees, as they seek to understand and criticize Government policy.

Interdepartmental discussions are another sensitive area which the Government has ruled cannot be revealed to committees. Earlier this year Mr Mark Carlisle, the Education Secretary, told the Education Select Committee that it would be wrong for him to give this kind of evidence concerning the funding

and organization of committees.

The report by Anne Davis, research officer, states it is no use to make specific recommendations on further reforms in the select committee structure, but more on political problems and administrative issues are discussed at length.

The two party system leaves ministers little room for manoeuvre and there are too few opportunities to debate committee recommendations in the House.

However, the unprecedented support from both sides of the House and the recognition of the importance and fairness of children's members, means they are a credible force to be reckoned with.

Reformed: Select Committees

First Year by Anne Davis is available from the Outer Circle Policy Unit, 4 Cambridge Terrace, Leamington, N.W.1 4JL. Price £2.50.

Britain's aid goes to basic schooling in third World

by Hilary Wilce

Trends in educational aid and development are clearly reflected in a briefing paper on Great Britain's role in this field, just issued by the Overseas Development Administration.

More money is being spent on education for rural development, and on basic education in literacy and numeracy, while fewer funds are being channelled into secondary and tertiary education.

Development thinking is that the encouragement of primary and basic education brings better returns than investment in higher levels of education.

Britain no longer helps developing Commonwealth countries to found new universities, and the experienced teacher or administrator has replaced the eager young untrained volunteer as the typical

British educator working overseas. Of the estimated 2,500 long-term programmes, only 400 are now volunteers.

The paper says that Great Britain spent more than £90 million on aid to education in developing countries last year, and that further funds are channelled into basic education via multilateral agencies such as UNESCO and the World Development Fund.

But it makes no mention of central government decisions to back overseas aid, and to encourage students from overseas to study in Britain.

Britain's Help for Education Overseas: A Key Factor in Development, Overseas Development Administration, Eldon House, Place, London SW1E 5DH.

Parents' charter cannot be applied 'overnight'

Carlisle denies U-turn

by Biddy Passmore

Mr Mark Carlisle, the Education Secretary, last week denied that the Government was going back on its pledge to give parents the right to school governing bodies.

Such reports are completely untrue, he said in Bradford. "Right from the start, since I introduced the Education Bill... I have made it clear that the new provisions cannot be applied to all schools overnight."

It would inevitably take time and money to reconstitute the governing bodies of all 30,000 schools, he said. He hoped to bring in regulations by Easter making the new provisions apply to newly established schools and to schools for which a new instrument of government was made.

Mr Carlisle did not say if or when

the new arrangements would be extended to include all schools. But he said: "I hope that L.E.A.s will feel able quite quickly in reconstituting existing governing bodies to include parents and teachers where this is not already the case."

Mr Carlisle was replying to allegations from the Advisory Centre for Education, the education watchdog body, that the Government's plans for parent governors had been shelved indefinitely.

ACE's appeal to the Education Secretary in "name a date" has been taken up by a number of Conservative backbenchers, notably Mr William van Stratten, a former Education Minister. And Mr William Shelton, father of the "parents' charter" said this week he thought Mr Carlisle would

start counting under pressure to act if all local authorities had not made some moves towards changing their governing bodies by the end of next year.

The Government's present policy is strongly supported by the local authorities, who are relieved that an extra financial burden has been removed. They are seeking a similar delay in the implementation of the Act's provisions on infrastructure work for parents to help them choose schools.

Berkshire County Council has produced a Handbook for Governors. It contains a summary of the school governor's role — "watching, championing and mediating". But it says the governing body is an agent for the education authority, not independent of it.

Jobless lecturers snub work in classrooms

by Bert Lodge

Considerable numbers of redundant teacher education lecturers show no willingness to take jobs in schools, a conference was told this week.

Mr Bill Browne, director of the employment bureau opened six years ago by the lecturers' union, said the union's annual conference of closing colleges that were then 1200 redundant teacher educators from 92 institutions had an 18 per cent success rate.

Spreading at Milton Keynes college of education, due to close next year, Mr Browne said that a considerable number of the 1200 had indicated on the bureau questionnaire that they were not prepared to consider teaching in schools.

This was puzzling to employers who assumed that was what they specialized in.

But even a post like head of department in a secondary school seems like going back down the ladder six or seven rungs to these people.

Finding jobs for 180 represented a success rate of 15 per cent, compared with the 10 per cent for professional and executive Registrar of 8 per cent, Mr Browne pointed out.

Mr Francis Cummings, principal of Rolle College, Exmouth and a past president of the union, pointed out that the bureau's success rate was actually higher. A lot of the people registered are in their 60s and are not seeking redeployment.

Teachers' values come under scrutiny of research group

by Sandra Hempel

Teachers' attitudes and values, particularly to the law, the police and the media, are among the topics picked out for possible scrutiny by a research body launched this week.

The Social Affairs Unit plans to launch research into the education, welfare services, whose responsibility it should be according to a SAU council member, to prove that they are not wasting public money or abusing power.

The unit's director, Dr Digby Anderson, said his was particularly interested in areas such as teacher training and the accountability of schools. Among the other subjects to be examined will be the SAU's examination of standards in schools, the role of education in industrial practice, bias in social and political education, innovations in school

curricula and teaching methods and the role of the Schools Council.

Referring to "the social pressures which impel the rulers of modern society to intervene, intervene and hope of subsidiary mediators and by crippling society", an SAU council member, Professor Julius Gould, said that many academics supported the meddling.

The unit plans to seek funds from employers and unions. It claims to have already attracted money from industry although no union has yet subscribed.

The unit's first paper, on the need for change in the welfare state, will be published in January. Its advisory council includes Mrs Caroline Cox of London University and Professor David Martin of the London School of Economics.

Pay delay saves council £220,000

Uncontrolled Birmingham City Council is considering a plan to save £220,000 a year by delaying the payment of teachers' salaries every month and earning interest on the money.

Under the scheme, salaries would be paid on the last day of the month, Mr Tony Miller, press officer for the National Union of Teachers, attacked the scheme saying that teachers' all too often had to wait for salary payments.

The authority has already decided the pay cheques for July and August should be issued separately from next year to save a further £110,000.

Researchers face their report's critics

by Stephen Cohen

The authors, Miss Jane Stoddman and Dr Ken Fogelman, rebutted the charges and revealed that the next stage of their work — an investigation of examination results — would be published in March. The authors did as well in comprehending the original report in spite of the objections raised that they did not publish the original raw data on which the findings were based.

This criticism was a central feature of the counter-attack by Mrs Cox and Dr Marks. The authors, who included four professors of education, chief advisers and head teachers, also discussed the role of the

press in educational research. Mrs Cox and Dr Marks said the public had been misinformed by misleading headlines and articles. Mrs Stoddman and Dr Fogelman said they were happy with the treatment given to their work.

The two sides of the dispute appeared to make no move towards each other, but one participant during the day-long meeting, Professor Mark Wrigley from Reading University, said that he had been swayed by the arguments of Dr Marks and Mrs Cox and believed their claims.

Personal column

Mary Warnock

No sex please . . .

Katharine Whitehorn writing about sex education in *The Observer*, November 16, said this: "If the moralists really want the kids to grow up in ignorance, I'd say insistence on sex being taught at school is the best way to do it. Then it would be just one more tedious thing for teachers to drone on about."

Without wishing to enter (yet) any controversy about sex education, I must say how deeply right I think she is. Being taught things at school normally turns the subject matter into something not only dead but neutral. Efforts to be up-to-date, or in relation to the subject in the child's experience have little effect.

The truly result is that more is sucked in to the death chamber. The moment something is a school subject, particularly if it is compulsory, then it is inevitably connected with the learning, aching boredom of the classroom. Never since school have I myself suffered such physical agonies of boredom as I remember when learning, for example, about tea or rice or other vaguely "geographical" topics.

A kind of sickness affects me when I think of such things, even now. Of course there are exceptions: a wonderful teacher, and wonderful pupils who not only want to know, but can remember what they are told, or what it is they have to go to the public library to find out.

But the normal situation is that the only thing worth teaching at school is skill — a skill that pupils could not acquire if they did not go to school.

There could be some controversy about what counts as a skill: but it is possible to distinguish between skills and other things taught. To acquire a skill is to be enabled to do something which one could not do, or not do properly, without it. Thus learning to ride a bicycle is a skill, so is learning to speak and understand a foreign language, to speak and write one's own language effectively or elegantly, to play the horn, to swim, to sing, to calculate, to play tennis or chess.

What is common to all these kinds of learning is that they need practice, and that, though a teacher is necessary in every case, the teacher is not primarily engaged in passing on information but in sharing expertise and offering encouragement. In the acquisition of a skill it is habit-memory that is required, not memorizing.

Local authorities therefore have an educational duty to consider cheaper ways of teaching instruments, mental music and singing. Such teaching is not just icing on the educational cake. And I believe that there are such ways.

I should say that if I lived in Somerset I should want to make sure that all these things had been explored — before the radical and anti-educational cut was made.

prejudice bogusness about them, if the pretence is that the outcome is unknown. Indeed, if the outcome is on what is expected, the "experience" is usually by-passed, and recourse has to be made to the textbook instead.

Exactly the same bogusness is manifest in many kinds of historical "research" or ecological "discovery".

Children may be excused for thinking that a lot of time would be saved if their teacher simply told them what is already well-known, but of no special interest to children. In the teaching of skills, on the other hand, there is room for genuine innovation.

In becoming skilled a child has a new tool. He can put it to whatever use he likes. If I teach you to speak German, I don't at the same time teach you what to say. If you write well, you can write well about anything. And if you become good at it, you are really good. Pretence is impossible.

For Nietzsche was right. The Will to Power is not more than the will to do things rather than merely know and think about things. Knowledge is desirable only in so far as it leads to possible action. Most people, and especially most children, want to do, and not to know. Once involved in action, they will pick up the information they most need. Above all they want, and need, to do for themselves.

This leads me, by an easy transition of thought, to Somerset. There the L.E.A. is deciding (perhaps has already decided) to stop financing instrumental music lessons in their schools. Here is a whole range of skills which they have decided not to allow pupils to acquire. (It is not enough to say that parents will have to pay. There simply will not be enough good teachers, if local authority finance comes to an end.)

It seems to me that this is a mistake, and would be a mistake even if none of the children of Somerset had ever become a professional musician. For the genuine ability to do something you could not do before the education of playing yourself, not just listening, is incomparable, and worth the rest of school put together — not just temporarily but permanently. For if a child is even moderately good at his musical instrument, he gets not only pleasure, but a sense of control over it, and over the music he plays — a sense of power which is a crucial ingredient in self-respect.

Local authorities therefore have an educational duty to consider cheaper ways of teaching instruments, mental music and singing. Such teaching is not just icing on the educational cake. And I believe that there are such ways.

I should say that if I lived in Somerset I should want to make sure that all these things had been explored — before the radical and anti-educational cut was made.

More over, there can be no pretence involved in either teaching or learning. In the acquisition of scientific information, for example, the teacher may set up an "experiment" in which the pupil has to "find out" what a result will be.

Now, part of the purpose of such experiments may be the acquisition of skills, and so far they are legitimate. But very often there is a

pretext for the acquisition of skills, and so far they are legitimate. But very often there is a

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Huge surge in graduate unemployment

by Rita di Giuseppe

VERONA
Graduate unemployment in Italy has increased drastically over the last three years. One and a quarter million graduates are now out of work, 90 per cent of them women.

Arts graduates, with degrees in such subjects as philosophy and psychology are least likely to find work. Economics and physics graduates tend to fare better. But further down the educational scale, even the once highly regarded "classical" (arts/sciences) school diploma has lost its appeal for employers. Firms seeking school leavers for unskilled jobs shun graduates, preferring applicants with some specific training in management or bookkeeping.

As a result "classical" school leavers find themselves with the unenviable choice between university (and the prospect of graduate unemployment beyond) or a job for which they are over-educated and will almost certainly be under-paid.

Some alternatives to a university degree do exist, however. Italy offers the 19-year-old school leaver about 70 professional short-term higher education courses, which groom young people for professions in high demand on the employment market.

The courses are scattered throughout the country and generally organized with the cooperation of university institutes. They require a minimum of two years attendance.

South Africa

Unrest as more white staff resign

by John Kane-Berman

JOHANNESBURG

It is not only black education in South Africa that is in a state of crisis. White schoolteachers have been making moves to turn their professional associations into trade unions to organize go-slow and work-to-rule action in protest against poor salaries, and large numbers are simply resigning.

The resulting shortage of teachers is among the first problems that confront the new Minister of Education, Dr Gerrit Viljoen, who took office in October.

A delegation of angry teachers met Dr Viljoen early in November to put their demands. They pushed out that unless he makes a satisfactory announcement on the salary question soon, the 1981 intake in teacher training colleges is likely to be very low, as would-be teachers abandon the idea of entering the profession.

In the first eight months of this year, 2,750 of the 24,000 teachers at white government schools in the Transvaal province quit their jobs. Last year 1,463 left in the same period. Officials of their association say that about 10 per cent of the half-million white pupils in the province are missing or late on school days because of the shortage.

By the end of the year resignations are expected to total around 3,500.

The head of a university physics department warned in a recent lecture that the country was facing a "complete collapse of physical science education at secondary

school level" because of a country-wide shortage of 1,000 adequately-qualified physical science teachers.

Last month Professor H. O. Marais, head of the Transvaal Onderwysersvereniging—which represents Afrikaans-speaking teachers in the province—said that the crisis of the qualified teacher shortage was only just beginning, since it has been estimated that enrolment at teachers' training colleges in the Transvaal this year is 40 per cent lower than last.

Professor Nopier Boyce, rector of the Johannesburg College of Education (JCE), which trains English-speaking teachers, told THE TES that he was able to offer places to 470 new students this year, but that his intake was only 361.

The training college for Afrikaans teachers in Potchefstroom likewise reports that for the first time in five years it could not fill all its places this year.

White teachers have been complaining bitterly of poor salaries for the best part of a decade. They were particularly angered last year when they did not receive the pay rise given to other public servants, and they dismissed this year's 14 per cent increase as inadequate. They have now demanded that Dr Viljoen give them a 25 per cent rise with effect from October 1.

The monthly salary of the headmaster of a large secondary school is now just over R1,200 (about £685).

The teachers say that the Government has told them money has to go to the country's defence force, but they suspect that one of the other reasons their salaries have

been kept down is to enable the authorities to reduce the discrepancy between black and white teachers' earnings.

Now Afrikaans teachers in the Transvaal have given notice that unless they are given power to establish a special negotiating body on wages and service conditions they may establish a trade union with power to strike—a move which represents a considerable shift of attitude within a profession which has traditionally seen such actions as opposed to its teaching vocation.

But poor pay is only one aspect of the problem. Another is sex discrimination. The Transvaal Education Department (TED) reserves one third of teaching posts in primary schools and two-fifths in secondaries for men. The intention is to redress the present female-male "imbalance" of three to one.

The result of this policy is that if there is a vacancy in a male post at a school, a woman can be appointed to it in a temporary capacity only, and the force has been expressed that she would be replaced or moved elsewhere if a man happened to become available.

Last year 120 women graduates of JCE were unable to obtain permanent posts because female quotas were full. At the same time, the politician in charge of education in the Transvaal, Dr van der Merwe Brink, admitted last month that the TED now had 371 vacant posts that it could not fill with properly-qualified teachers.

The sex policy also has the consequence that an Afrikaans-speaking man would be given preference over an English-speaking woman, even for a post in an English-speaking

school. Professor Boyce says that in one English-medium primary school in Johannesburg, English is spoken in the staffroom.

In fact, the shortage of English teachers is as acute as that of Afrikaans teachers. The authorities tend to argue that English-speaking teachers are less committed to serving their communities in fields like education than the Afrikaans and more easily lured to more lucrative jobs in the private sector.

But many English-speaking teachers believe that they are being "Afrikanized" since they are under control in white education in the policy of the Afrikaans Broederbond, the secret political and cultural organization that is known to have great influence over the country's education policy.

Dr Viljoen is himself a former chairman of the Broederbond, and Dr Piet Meyer—also a former Broederbond chairman and now retired as head of the country's radio and television service—is a record that "the Afrikaansness of the English-speakers must be a philosophy" so that English-speaking South Africans can learn to understand the Afrikaans outlook on philosophy.

Dr Ken Horsthouse, an English-speaking educationist who was a few years ago from the chief vice, recently said that English-speaking teachers felt alienated from the TED and feared that a liberal English cultural tradition was being gradually pushed out in favour of nationalistic authoritarian education which lays stress on obedience rather than on individualism.

Television, books and newspapers lead way to growth of Arabic in syllabus

by Benny Morris

JERUSALEM

The number of Israeli Jewish schoolchildren studying Arabic has risen dramatically in the past three years as a direct consequence of the Israel-Egypt peace process that began with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem in November, 1977.

In 1976 some 100,000 pupils—mostly in high school—took Arabic as their second foreign language (rather than French, Latin or German). Today some 140,000 pupils study Arabic—90,000 in junior high schools and high schools who take literary Arabic and 50,000 in grades four to six, who take spoken Arabic, acquiring only a basic proficiency in reading and writing.

With the dawn of peace between Israel and its Arab neighbours, the Education Ministry accorded priority to Arabic, channeling extra funds for this purpose to schools and teacher training colleges despite the severe budget cuts

imposed by the Treasury during the past two years.

Extra funds have been allocated to teacher training colleges to train teachers of Arabic language, and the number of such trainees has risen from 200 in 1972 to 450 this year. Educational television has produced a series of Arabic teaching programmes to be broadcast in the afternoons starting later this year. To meet with this trend, a private entrepreneur, London-born publisher David Horman last week brought out two new Arabic language teaching newspapers, the first of their kind in the country.

Horman, who already has a book on the Good Times English language teaching newspaper, has produced the two four-page Arabic newspapers, *Sohannot* (Hello) and *Jor-far* (My Newspaper), on a trial basis of 10,000 copies each.

Herman, who doubles as editor, was assisted in the production of the newspapers by the Education Ministry's two Jerusalem district inspectors of Arabic.

Jor-far is completely printed in Arabic and is designed for the junior high school and high school Arabic learners.



Front page of the new Arabic language teaching newspaper Jor-far.

Stabbing leads to renewed violence fears

by Jane Jessel

PARIS

The stabbing of a secondary school pupil has refuelled the constantly smouldering issue of increasing violence in French schools. Teachers and parents' representatives have expressed their concern over the suppression of many supervisors' posts, which they believe to be a principal cause of the problem.

The boy was stabbed while trying to help a teacher whose lesson was being disrupted by a group of youths loudly playing a transistor radio just outside the classroom. Although the incident was so extreme, the school where it occurred—the Lycée d'enseignement Professionnel (LEP) Jules-Vernes, in the Paris suburb of Clichy-Sous-Bois—is apparently typical of the establishments where violence is on the increase.

Despite their euphemistic title, LEPs are the latter-stage secondary schools, created after educational reorganization in 1977, where the rest go after the more academic pupils move on to the traditional lycées. The aim is that LEP pupils should leave school with some kind of (usually technical) qualification, but in many cases, especially in deprived areas such as Seine-Saint-Denis where Clichy-Sous-Bois is situated, the pupils tend to have no clear idea of where their future lies.

Earlier this year, an inquiry studied the problem in 47 colleges, the first stage of secondary education. It found that all the schools surveyed were affected; most common was the lack of discipline (80 per cent of schools); then recklessness (58 per cent). Fighting, both inside and outside the school premises, was common. To over half the cases, the violence had a racist origin.

According to a report prepared by a working group on violence in 1977—under the chairmanship of Justice Minister Alain Peyrefitte, young people represented just over 10 per cent of all delinquents. This violence had, however, risen since 1964, and especially since 1970.

Study aims to discredit class grades

by Kenneth Shaw

Soviet Union

Unusual methods have been tried out by Soviet researchers intent on producing new, non-grading education programmes.

Techniques are being developed to show how grades should be abolished and children freed from the pleasure of being in school.

Numbers from one to 100 are shown in red on cardboard, and children are asked to choose their favourite digit. As part of a project begun 20 years ago to investigate "grading" teaching methods.

The team found a clear motivational significance to figures. Children taught by conventional methods and from one to five, with five being the top mark, persistently did not choose the numbers one, two, three, six and seven. About 80 per cent of these pupils chose the number five and the rest selected four, eight and nine.

In experimental classes taught by new methods in which the course was made within the course and grades were done away with, the numbers were selected by two, three and four were chosen by about 20 per cent of pupils. Some 30 per cent chose five, eight, eight and nine, and half of the sample chose number five.

Researchers, seeking reasons for these choices, concluded that the conventional learning, grading and assessment process was executed, produced a "grade" linked number with the grade level wanted to receive—hence the popularity of five.

Choice of eight and nine was traced to the sum total and the choice of numbers were based on the different meanings of the numbers.

The reasons for choosing the number five were not clear. It was pointed out that in this group only three per cent chose number five as their favourite, without fully understanding the reasons for their choice.

LETTERS

'Unethical' approach to redundancy

Sir—As parents, we would like to protest most strongly against the "unethical" approach to redundancy methods to be employed by Staffordshire County Council Education Committee ITES November 28. Such a system is surely most unethical. For a head teacher to have to nominate a member of staff for dismissal seems an impossible and embarrassing situation. But for that member of staff to be given the right of appeal, providing he or she names another member of staff to take their place in the lists of the unemployed, surely means a staffroom

atmosphere which must be detrimental to the education of our children. We feel that this second named member of staff, if the appeal is accepted, has no right of appeal.

Your article states that unions have advised their members not to cooperate with this disgraceful system. Does this mean that any member of staff could be chosen for redundancy by a committee, without reference to a headmaster, with the union's instruction? A committee which could well have little knowledge of the school and its particular needs.

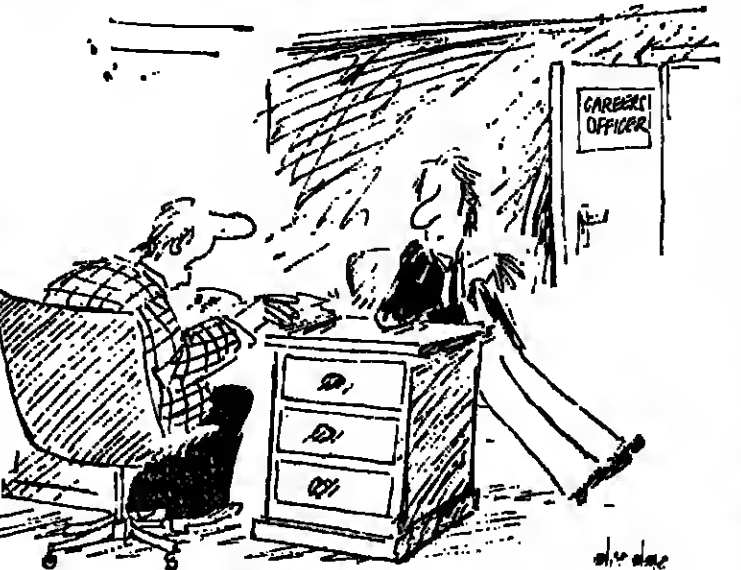
For parents, especially those with children of less ability who need more individual help, the thought of losing members of staff is most disturbing, whatever method is used to make teachers redundant.

If cuts have to be made, surely a reduction in teaching staff—quoted as a reduction of 420 in Staffordshire—would inevitably mean larger classes, therefore, lower standards of education.

MRS J. STOTT, chairman
MRS J. BAGSHAW, secretary,
PTA, Joseph Clark and High Schools, Burton-on-Trent.

Disruptive units need debating

Sir—I note the concern of Martin Peadar (December 5) about the social balance of pupils in disruptive units. I carried out research in 1979 and 1980 in one division of the ILCA into the setting up of off-site school support units for disruptive pupils. A survey I conducted in January/February 1980 produced the following statistics. There were 59 pupils on roll in six units. Of these 35 (59 per cent) were boys and 18 (25 per cent), 20 (34 per cent) and 19 (29 per cent) were in the third, fourth and fifth years respectively. The pupil composition in the parent schools according to the estimates of the head teachers suggested an aggregate of approximately 40 per cent black pupils.



I admire your optimism, but I'm a missionary in Beverly Hills.

Real classroom work that lies behind the statistics

Sir—Your front page lead story (November 28) reports that "Information given by chief education officers on how much time staff spend in the classroom" is still being kept secret from teachers. Teachers do not need this information—they know how and where they spend their working lives. Chief education officers on the other hand ought to check the accuracy of their information. How the kind of form which is before me—"Staffing and Organization of Secondary Schools"—on which heads are required to analyse the weekly teaching load of each colleague.

The form in the past was completed by reference to the formal timetable constructed months earlier. The resultant statement of the time a teacher spends in the classroom represents the basic commitment. To arrive at a more realistic and accurate statement of contact time requires the addition of the time spent substituting for absent colleagues and the periods given to the additional groups preparing for re-tasks needing specific remedial work of extra counselling.

Too faces an unhappy alternative. Either the administrators are so out of touch with life of the chalk

face that they have forgotten these facts or that they have ignored them as inconvenient in the current discussion.

One views with equal concern the apparent failure to acknowledge that all teachers have numerous essential tasks outside the classroom, a lapse which explains the conflict between the survey assembled by persons or persons unknown and the findings of the National Foundation for Educational Research.

When however I return to the form on my desk, "Staffing and Organization of Secondary Schools", I find the following instruction: "If a member of staff is timetabled for administration or pastoral care, please enter this as a subject under the appropriate column."

The officers, it seems, do recognize these functions. It is that they do not regard them as of prime importance?

NORMAN BUTTERWORTH,
Greenfield Lane,
Holehouse Village, Chester.

Letters for publication should be as short as possible and should be written on one side of the paper only. The editor reserves the right to cut or amend them if necessary.

The outrage of the £30,000 print-out

Sir—I am outraged by the report (THE TES, December 5) that the Social Science Research Council has awarded Lancaster University a grant of £31,264 for a comparison of a million words of American speech and writing with a similar corpus of material from this country.

Nut only is each linguistic corpus nearly 20 years old, and therefore— as your report admits—far from being a sample of current English. What is even worse are the naive assumptions of the researchers about what constitutes "correct" English. Since when was it "incorrect" to begin a sentence, or even a paragraph, with "But"? Here the researchers never read Macaulay? And how confidently can anyone claim that it is wrong to say "the family think" or to begin a sentence with "And"?

Out worse still is the blithe assumption that such a study can provide useful information to textbook writers on "how the language is used rather than how grammarians and pedagogues think it should be used"? One of the great issues of the moment is how, on today's minimal capitulation allowances, to get textbooks of any sort at all into the hands of schoolchildren. In this and many other quarters of education there is a desperate shortage of cash. To spend £31,000 of public money on feeding the detritus of 1961 into computers and pouring over the print-outs is, in present circumstances, unpardonable folly.

KENNETH PINNOCK,
Educational director,
John Murray, 50 Albemarle Street,
London, W1.

Local broadcasting's duties

Sir—Although this area does not yet have an independent local radio station, the London stations are receiving at good signal strength. A lack of local news and information does not prevent my endorsing much of Mary Warnock's argument in Personal Column (THE TES, November 21).

However, would not most of the virtues she claims for local radio lie equally in the television? The educated slouch of the Southern television region, with attention apparently concentrated on the extremes, tends to leave Sussex somewhat neglected.

At a time when franchises are under consideration, I hope the IBA will urge the applicants to undertake to satisfy what is an increasingly strong demand for local news and for programmes which concern themselves with the culture and interests of areas which have a recognizable identity.

B. NEVILL,
Head of Forest Community School,
Horsham, West Sussex.

She hushes this on her claim that "signals" can be plainly heard in many parts of Essex."

I doubt the second statement, because our medium wave signal hardly covers Norfolk adequately, and our VHF signal can be heard only in the east of the county, though 1981 should produce a big improvement in both. However, I wonder if Mrs Warnock is not confusing this station with the BBC regional service which was based in Norwich. This was designed to be heard (on VHF only) throughout East Anglia, but the service was discontinued in two stages earlier this year.

But it is her first statement which most concerns me. I cannot control with any precision who hears my output, but I can control its contents, and it is with cheerful enthusiasm that I concern myself only with the people and happening of Norfolk, with of course a national news service. Is Mrs Warnock suggesting that Norfolk itself is too big to provide a community of interest for its inhabitants?

Yours faithfully,
MIKE CHANEY,
Station Manager,
BBC Radio Norfolk.

The blissful 'sound of silence'

Sir—Gerald Holgh in "Brook" (THE TES November 28) is paid for his assessment of the Schools Proms. You may be pleased to have my free and gratis comment.

I only realized "what I had let myself in for" on arriving at the Albert Hall and promptly thought "I won't last half way through this", dreading a cacophony of crisp bags, sweet wrappers, pop—the bottled or canned varieties.

At the end I was saying, "the age of miracles is not over". Not because of racial prejudices on the part of the performance and the enjoyment of it. Paper Concores were seen flying round during the breaks, but the breaks were there for that, weren't they?

I hope you appreciate my blurb for future performances however doubtful your own future is.

T. COEN,
St Joseph's College,
Birkfield, Tinsley.

Oxbridge chances

Sir—Angela Morris need have no fears about applying to Oxford or Cambridge from the ruralised sector (December 5). Most Oxbridge dons spend too much time, and effort in trying to attract the best applicants from the jaws of rival colleges to worry about operating "extensive old boy networks". Where independent schools have the edge is in providing advice on which colleges offer the more attractive proposition to applicants. This has especially been the case in recent years with the spate of "independent" changing from stage-set to residential.

NIGEL HOOKER,
St John's College,
Cambridge.

Schools programme is stepped up

by Isabel Marlow

SALISBURY

Since the black majority socialist government came to power, even months ago, the number of children in school has risen from 850,000 to 1.3 million—about 61 per cent of all school-age children.

More than 10,000 schools, closed during the seven-year guerrilla war, have been reopened and are largely staffed by untrained teachers.

The Minister of Education and Culture, Mr Dzingai Mutumbuka, has predicted that next year, with free primary education, the number of children in school will rise to two million. To overcome the critical shortage of teachers, the Minister announced on November 16 the introduction of a half four-year crash teacher-training course.

The Zimbabwe Integrated Teacher Education Course (Zintec) will provide academic, professional and practical training for untrained teachers who aspire to become qualified and to gain higher rates of pay, and for students with a reasonable education who have been complaining of lack of job opportunities.

It is estimated that there are 10,000 untrained teachers who would benefit from the new scheme, which will run alongside the conventional teacher-training colleges offering the traditional three-year course.

The Zintec programme will incorporate full-time courses, correspondence assignments and subordinated service as a teacher.

A Zintec national centre is to be established in Salisbury, respon-

sible for overall administration, while regional centres will train the teachers.

People over the age of 20 with five or fewer years of school or one year's working experience will be eligible for the course which will begin and end with a 16-week term at a regional centre. They will be appointed full-time teachers for 16 terms during which they will follow a specially prepared correspondence course and be expected to return to a teachers' centre for three weeks' in-service training each alternate holiday.

The Minister said there would be a fresh intake to the integrated scheme at the beginning of each school year. At secondary level, the Minister stated recently that he expected the form one intake to rise from 22,000 to 83,000.

The good schools missed by the bad press

Sir—Following the publication of the report by the Independent London Education Authority, I have made much of that document's criticisms of the authority's secondary schools. Regrettably, the press comment was not so balanced. It took no account of the specific difficulties faced by the schools, nor did it refer to the educational opportunities offered by the vast majority of these schools.

Wandsworth Borough Council has shown itself to be equally ignorant of the setting in which the schools operate. It has pointed to what it perceives to be the low standards and the poor public examination results in the borough's schools and has based its arguments on the fact that

favour of establishing Wandsworth as an education authority independent of the ILCA.

Rarely is the authority publicly congratulated for work well done in its schools, or for pupils' outstanding achievements—even such achievements as the most closely associated with the most modest.

This year, four Wandsworth schools have done extremely well in competitions organized by national newspapers. In April, a sixth former from Wandsworth School, Rona Thomas, won third prize in the Observer Weekend essay competition. Her splendid essay "Small is Beautiful" was judged to be of a higher standard than entries from boys and girls attending some of the most highly esteemed public schools in the country.

This week, the Sunday Times

announced the results of this year's secondary schools' magazine competition. Furrdown School, like Wandsworth, a Wandsworth ILCA Division 10 school, won second prize out of the hundreds of secondary schools in the country which submitted entries. Two other Division 10 schools, Ernest Revin School and Spencer Park School, were commended in this competition and won certificates of merit.

Countless examples might be given from schools throughout the ILCA of excellent achievements, both curricular and extra-curricular. It is a distortion of the truth for the press to give the public the impression that London secondary schools are failing the capital's children.

ALESSANDRA WILSON,
Head Teacher, Wandsworth School,
Chiswick, Division 10 Secondary Heads.

Race and choice

Sir—Your correspondent states that "Younger Schools in Liverpool, which is now about to close, has been held up as a textbook example of racial integration" (December 5). She then goes on to admit that, while built to hold 2,000 pupils, it now contains only 435 because of racial prejudice on the part of white parents. That is hardly a shining example of a successful multi-racial school. In fact, less than 50 children in the whole of Liverpool this year selected Poddington as their first choice of secondary school. A far higher proportion of ethnic minority students than now attend Poddington will be attending the new Liverpool Institute for Girls, which will be housed in the same building.

RICHARD ROSS,
Assistant to David Alton, MP,
Liberal Whip's Office,
House of Commons, London.

COURSES


Thames Polytechnic
PHYSICS COURSE
FOR TEACHERS

The course provides a complete syllabus in physics for teachers. It is designed for teachers who are currently working in schools and who wish to improve their knowledge and skills in physics. The course is run by experienced teachers and includes practical work and theory. It is a full-time course lasting one year. Places are limited and applications should be sent to the Polytechnic as soon as possible.

Enquiries to Dr T. A. Lee, School of Materials Science and Physics, Thames Polytechnic, Watlington Road, Uxbridge, London, UB8 3PH. Tel: 0181 606 1000.

In part one of our holiday serial by Ian Lewis, a modern Scrooge is taken on a revealing journey by the ghost of Education Past

דברי חיים



Richard, Cole

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us the truly constituency vote; nor about slightly increasing the charges for school meals, because that could lose us some of the wavering voters. . . .

"Fine, Mark! I think that's enough. You've given us an ideal vote-winning formula on Education for the rank-and-file members. Thus, the important vote from the shoddy at the head of the table!"

"In any case," the voice continued, "as we make job opportunities more scarce and as the microchip reduces the need for jobs, we can't need anything like as much provision of Education. In any case, Willie has some proposals for an alternative kind of educational provision for the layabouts. Isn't that so, Willie?"

Carlisle grabbed hold of the spirit's hand and dragged it away. "Did I really say that?" he asked. "Could I really be sitting around that table working to develop a trusting public? Did people really believe what we wrote? Did they actually feel that we had a concern for improving the Education of all children?"

"I tell you these were shadows of things that have been," said the ghostly voice. "That they are what they are, do not blame me!"

"Take me back. Haven't we no longer I Carlisle cried. Suddenly he was conscious of lying in his own bed, back in his own dark room. He hardly had time to realize this when he fell asleep again.

features

Coercion, General Sir John Hackett once remarked, is a fragile instrument. It is no less fragile for pupils than for soldiers who, in the end, can only be commanded by consent. Pupils below the sixth form are all conscripts, and perhaps they are less clear about their objectives than servicemen.

How many children, for instance, would see the function of their lessons as democracy's attempt to prepare them for participation in a free society? Yet without this creative tension between life and learning, real education is impossible. This was W. H. Auden's point when he said that the aim of education was to induce "the maximum amount of neurosis that each individual can take without breaking".

Life and learning, in often pulling in opposite directions, require an intensity, an inner compulsion, if they are to interact and be mutually beneficial. The starting point is wonder, curiosity, and the joy of discovery, which external compulsion is more likely to extinguish than ignite.

In creative learning, hope for the outcome requires the pain of labour. Without a vital sentiment of this kind, learning is anti-life. It becomes destructive criticism, the mere digestion of facts, or a retreat into an ivory tower. This is the British Disease, the separation of thought from feeling, learning from life, and industry from education.

T. S. Eliot dates this "dissociation of sensibility" from the seventeenth century. Reversing his comment, we need to say to-day that it is not enough to "look into the cerebral cortex, the nervous system, and the digestive tracts", we must also "look into our hearts".

The education of the emotions is not a prominent feature of British education. C. S. Lewis claimed that in his experience "for every pupil who needs to be guarded from a week excess of sensibility there are three who need to be awakened from the slumber of cold vulgarity". By starving the sensibility of our pupils we only make them easier prey for the propagandist when he comes. A hard heart is no infallible protection against a soft head.

Of his own students, Thomas Huxley said: "They work to pass, not to know; and outraged science takes her revenge. They do pass and they don't know." The practice still continues. The compulsion to be qualified replaces the love of learning. This is why so many graduates shake the dust of their specialism from their feet and migrate to other fields at the earliest opportunity.

Perhaps only an Albert Schweitzer achieves the kind of synthesis of life and learning that real education requires. But without such a vision the people die; there can be no vision through water-tight bulkheads. Coercion cannot induce commitment, which must derive its root from life and its direction from learning.

In learning to speak, a child masters the most difficult task it ever has to tackle. It does so because of the joy of "victory" and the rewards obtained through active involvement in the world around it. To achieve this mastery, the child submits willingly to endless correction and repetition.

Studies of animal behaviour suggest that living creatures are by nature both submissive and self-assertive. Francis Bacon explained this need to harness freedom and necessity by declaring that Nature cannot "be commanded except by being obeyed".

This is the paradox of education and freedom. Self-discipline, not coercion, is the watchword. Yet, as Whitehead pointed out, "so many are the delicate points to be considered in education—it is necessary to have acquired the habit of cheerfully undertaking imposed tasks". By force of example, inspired teachers have always managed to turn compulsion into cheerful acceptance. But without good groundwork and support in the home the task is virtually impossible.

It is especially difficult within the academic tradition. The Crowther Report described this as a method by which "the teacher can best proceed by first expounding the principle and then illustrating it by teaching the rule and its exceptions, and then setting the class to work on examples".

This is to treat education as a product rather than a process, as something handed down *ex cathedra*. The Crowther Report concedes that there are other methods, the non-academic ones, which "cannot understand what is meant by the

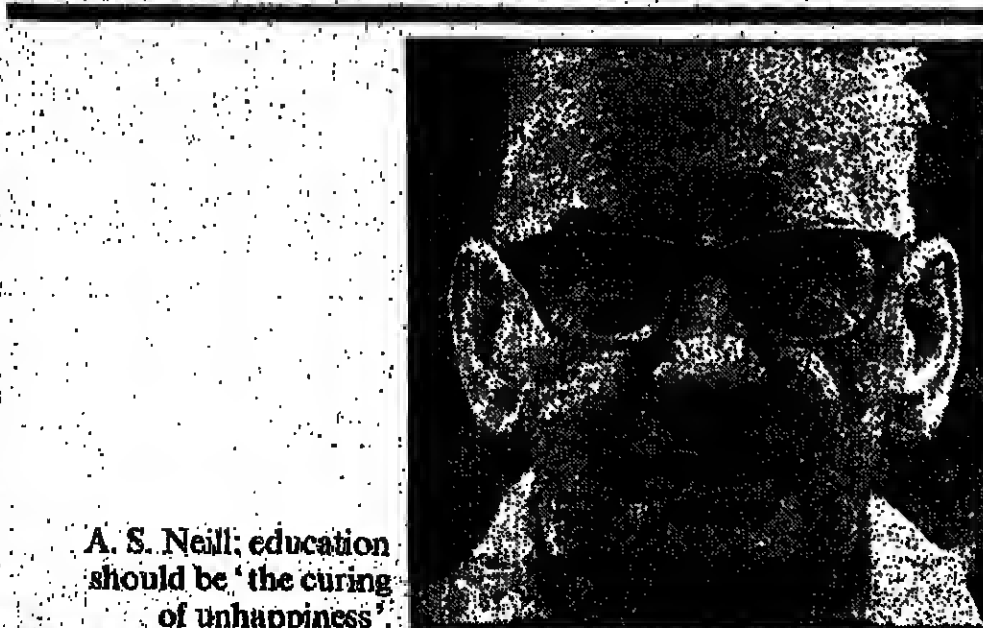
The British Disease

Philip Coggin questions the value of compulsory education, and suggests some changes of emphases

W. H. Auden: education should induce 'the maximum amount of neurosis that an individual can take without breaking'.



Thomas Huxley: students 'work to pass, not to know'. They do pass and they don't know.



A. S. Neill: education should be 'the curing of unhappiness'.

rule until they have observed the examples".

This latter method is the practical or technological approach. In identifying and prescribing two types of treatment for the two different types of mind, the analytic and the synthetic, Crowther helped to spread the British Disease. All minds need to synthesize as well as analyse.

The point, however, is that the problem-solving, technological method includes the academic approach. It uses academic principles, solutions, and established knowledge if these are appropriate. If they are not, it invents new ones.

It is ironic that Britain, a front-runner in freedom, democracy and industrialization, should, by and large, have opted for education for the authoritarian, academic

approach, to the virtual exclusion of technology which provides the power to change society and its environment. Hence the growing feeling of helplessness in face of social pressures and bureaucratic barriers, and the consequent resort to apathy or violence.

Neither reaction can help the individual to self-reliance, nor Britain to economic survival. Education must become a preparation for a technological age in which each person can be an active participant in, and a shaper of, his society. Such a process of liberation cannot be conducted by force. Even Plato, whose ideal Republic had all the machinery of dictatorship, recognised the absurdity of compulsion in education.

All the branches of preliminary edu-

cation, he said, "must be taught to our pupils in their childhood, care being taken to convey instruction in such a shape as not to make it compulsory on them to learn. . . . No traces of slavery ought to mix with the studies of the freeborn man. . . . In the case of the mind, study, pursued under compulsion, remains rooted in the memory. Hence you must train the children in their studies without any air of constraint".

Plato, of course, was referring to the elite. Unquestioning obedience was to be the lot of the lower orders.

Compulsion precludes the nourishing and nurturing of the child's sense of wonder and curiosity, and prevents the birth of that inner compulsion and motivation which abounds in voluntary activities of all sorts. What G. Wilson Knight said of amateur drama is true of all cultural pursuits:

"Back-stage activity on a first-night may be as nervous and intense, and call for the same qualities of technical efficiency, timing, and decision, as a full production demands, and quite amazingly gets from young people of all ages—hava myself known few exceptions—in service of the most demanding and less kind."

Compulsory schooling actually destroys the rigour essential to the master-pupil relationship. Charlotte Brontë analysed this relationship in three of her novels: *Shirley*, *Jane Eyre*, and *The Professor*. The relationship in such cases is the entirely voluntary association between adults, and yet the master-teaches, with uncompromising firmness, and the pupil submits without surrendering her independence and self-respect.

"Christ beats his drum," said John Donne, "but he does not press men. Christ is served by volunteers." For Jesus, the master-disciple relationship grew from a position of equality. "Henceforth I call you not servants; but I have called you my friends."

In this situation criticism is frank and without ceremony. Work is done for service, not blind obedience. Yet the teacher imposes the discipline of the wood and pruning the fruitless branches. Out of friendship came emotion, feeling and the sentiment of happiness, the avowed aim of the great Christian educators of Medieval and Renaissance times.

The aim is not invalidated by removing it from its religious context. A. S. Neill also saw the aim of education as "the curing of unhappiness". The difficult child, he maintained, is the child who is unhappy, at war with himself and consequently with the world.

The dilemma remains. To abandon compulsory education would open the door to an even worse exploitation of the young. We might, however, change some of our emphases, and explore certain avenues more thoroughly with all sections of the local community.

First, the task of enforcing attendance should become the function of an agency outside the school. It would be responsible for those who had rejected their normal school. This would leave the teachers free to teach and to be judged by their ability as teachers, not wardens.

Second, the academic approach should become part of the technological approach, which is an open-ended, disciplined, problem-solving methodology applicable to all areas of life and learning, and the key to learning how to learn.

Third, school work could benefit much more from the group approach which is so successful in voluntary C.B.I. than the so-called "plea of the individual". A school should encourage a "peer-pressure" of responsibility, to communicate, to work as a member of a team.

Finally, there is the question of choice, an essential ingredient of freedom and of learning. Project work and a system of options provide choice within the school. The community as a whole could provide an even wider range of experiences, especially for the gifted and the unconventional.

Philip Coggin is head of Park School, High School, Swindon, and author of *Education for the Future: The Case for Radical Change*, published earlier this year by Pergamon (£12).

Happy Kirstmass
Harpy Crumpus

Christmas comes even to fictional characters. Russell Hoban visits his own creations: Tom and his Aunt, Neaera H and William G. Riddley Walker and the Crocodile family.

Illustrations by Quentin Blake.



Neaera H

By mid-November one becomes aware of having seen, out of the corner of one's eye, Christmas, like H. G. Wells's invisible man, peering round corners with the rain glinting on its unseen, nakedness. By early December I hear, as in a deserted corridor of the Underworld, its footsteps echoing behind.

In my less panicky Christmas moments I enjoy a gentle melancholy, a kind of world-endness made shy by gin. Not being good at story helps: kings and martyrs displaced in time and space, swarming through toy snowstorms, the general whorl of my mind, Henry IV, not the English one, the

other one, draws tight his cloak and eavesdrops in the snow before the door of Pope Gregory VII at Canossa. This Henry IV then mystically merges with our Henry IV and on Christmas Day in 1400 welcomes that poor sad Polonoisus whose Christian name I cannot remember, the one who needs help against the Turks if Constantinople is to be saved. And of course Constantinople won't be saved. It cannot be saved. It must be saved because that is the nature of things. The great dome, the great dim heaven of Hagia Sophia, hung with lights and lustre, stored with candle flames and mystified with incense, must have its evilness torn apart, must echo to the clatter of horse-men, the thudding of hooves, the rattling of silk hangings, the smothering of the other whether by Crusaders in 1204 or Turks in 1453. The settlement of the Cathedral of the Holy Wisdom begins with the building of it.

William G

What I say is: Forgive us our Christmas as we forgive those who Christmas against us. I have not this whatever for an "Economic" dinner, my days are not of that sort. And why will a woman give me Brandenburg Concerti rather than the now recording of The Art of Fugue? I'm being ungracious, I'm being stupid and silly.

Christmas at
Aunt Fidget
Wonkham-Strong's

At Christmas Tom gave Aunt Fidget Wonkham-Strong a new iron hat and the gave him a sledge.

"What's that wretched round the neck?" said Aunt Fidget. "So you won't go down a well to get it, I don't want you shuffling off the bank and into the river."

"There's ice on the river," said Tom. "Yes, but it's thin ice," said Aunt Fidget. "So keep your sack on. You may have three, gone, and then you must come in for more."

"What are we having?" said Tom. "Boiled larch with boiled dumplings and mashed thug," said Aunt Fidget. "And there's gladdening for pudding. Hurry with your bagging, now, dinner's almost ready."

Tom went on his sledge but the sledge did not move. "Silly to have to pull it both ways," said Tom. He took the sackcloth off the runners and down the hill he went.

"Coming," shouted Captain Najork across the river. His came gliding under the ice like a seal and he surfaced untopped, the nude ladle.

"Another one!" screamed the ladies. "This one's all to bluck!"

"Parve!" said the Headmistress. With one hand she fired Tom back across the river with the other she grabbed Captain Najork by the snout.

At that moment Aunt Fidget Wonkham-Strong was coming down the hill to her hat suit. From the observatory she had seen Captain



The sledge was moving fast, and Tom was just about to shoot off the riverbank when he saw something coming up through the ice in front of him. It was Captain Najork's head. The Captain was trying out the diving gear Aunt Fidget Wonkham-Strong had given him for Christmas.

Tom swerved sharply and the sledge hit a stump but he kept going. He shot across the river like a seal and he surfaced untopped, the nude ladle.

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Naer's not what bothers me about Christmas.

What bothers me about Christmas is that it is the great Us and Them-mor: it divides humanity into those who agree to be jolly and those who are outcasts. Why must I always be with the outcasts? Why shouldn't the jolly ones be the outcasts? Why shouldn't the Christmas majority be made up of decently miserable people drinking quietly and avoiding one another's eyes? Why is it always the loud-mouthed who prevail? And all that's not the essential bother.

The essential bother is the muddying of sharp things, the rubbing of clean things. On Christmas Day the big TV film will have Tully Savalo blowing up several bottlenoses of Germans, Clint Eastwood killing scores with his truly exemplary teeth. No, not his teeth; it's what he's got under his gonch. When he's got his back to the camera he kills them by flashing. Zap! You're dead because mine is bigger than yours. No, no, that's not what bothers me about Christmas.

Who bothers me about Christmas is something else altogether: Christ was born under a great star, he was born to be the ransom, the redeemer, the one for the many; but what were the many born for? What, still we do with our redemption?

"At least he doesn't smoke," said Mother. "That's something." On Christmas morning the Crocodiles opened their presents. Arthur's sister Emma gave Mother and Father the sweaters she had knitted for them and they gave her a camera. "I can't wait to take pictures of what comes next," said Emma. Mother and Father gave Arthur binoculars and a bird book. "Now I can watch you through the bird book," said Arthur. "No opened the door of the shed."

"It's a beach umbrella with wheels and a fan," said Mother. "We should be so lucky," said Father. "It's an aeroplane."

"It really flies," said Arthur. He got into the seat, pulled the starter cord, took off, flew once round the house, and landed. He showed Father how to steer and how to make the aeroplane go up and down. "It's all yours," he said.

"Batter not," said Mother to Father. "Remember the motorized skis."

"It looks like fun," said Father as he pulled the starter cord and took off.

"Stay over the river!" shouted Mother. "It's a soft landing, and you can always swim home."

"This is wonderful!" shouted Father from high up in the air. "How do I get down again?" "Leon forward," shouted Arthur. When Father leaned forward he saw how far down the ground was. He leaned back quickly, the aeroplane climbed sharply and Father stepped out of it into the top of a tall pine tree. He hugged the tree trunk as hard as he could while the aeroplane flew away. "Come down!" shouted Mother and Emma and Arthur.

"I think I'll just stop here and be quiet for a while," said Father.

Further stopped in the tree, well into the evening. As the moon came up, Jimson Crow came along, yawning a little as he flew. Nasty Crumpus, he said to Father.

"Happy Christmas!" said Father. "What are you doing in this part of the world?" said Jimson.

"Just getting away from everything for a bit," said Father. "You know how it is."

"I have a drink," said Jimson, pulling out a big flask.

"Thanks," said Father. "I don't mind if I do."

Happy Christmas! said Jimson. Happy Christmas! said Father.

review



Riddley Walker

Some places they do a feasting wel which they call it Kirstmass or Kirst Mass. Which there's eyes in that with tocker knowledge. Moss being what you'll use when you blow things up with the lunar G. Your Kirst Mass wel you've got the word eurt in there haven't you so poorly they done some kynd of Bai Time blowing with it. Parly that ben part of the 1 Bli 1 which it ben part of the uaw clew weal cause and ell. Causit avory dling what come after dunt.

Thera mor to it the thoro oint juo only the eyns part of it theros some thing unwar mouth of thot they aint giving up on him. Come this time of winter theywl dunt rom thier firas, lorling, and slung. they offer moren meat and drink thore ben peopl tow a part for

Father Crocodile's
Christmas High

"What's Arthur doing in the shed?" said Father Crocodile to Mother Crocodile.

"I think he's working on our Christmas present," said Mother.

"O God," said Father. "I know what you mean," said Mother. "My ribs still ache from when we bit that tree on those motorized tandem skis he made for us last year."

"Ribs!" said Father. "If it were only my ribs! Sometimes I wish we'd never given him that toolbox."

"At least he doesn't smoke," said Mother. "That's something."

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offering. In membership of the Little Shyning Man the Addom. Him what ben put in 2 time back way back in the hort of the wud hart of the ocan. Thots what your Kirst Moss goes back to its that Little Shyning Man put in 2 and trying to get back to gather eagen ever since. He cant do it tho try as he will. Which thers why they offer the nent and drink you see. Trying to get him to come back to gether only he oint never done it.

Some of them places, where they do thot Kirst Mass feasting, they theywl tel you the Little Shyning Man lare got a nother name. Which its a nome tels of the Power in him they coll him the Joner Gae or Inner Jecds. No use tolling them! he alot never coming back to gether they aint giving up on him. Come this time of winter theywl dunt rom thier firas, lorling, and slung. they offer moren meat and drink thore ben peopl tow a part for



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41 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3DO

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